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PROGRAMME NOTES

By JOHN OLIVER

Overture from Music to Goethe's "Egmont", opus 84 Ludwig van Beethoven
Born December 16, 1770; died March 26, 1827

This overture is one of ten numbers Beethoven composed as accompanimental music to Goethe's tragedy "Egmont". The other pieces are two soprano songs; four Entr'actes; Clara's Death; a Melodrama and Finale. Initial evidence of the composition of the music is to be found in Beethoven's sketch books of January, 1810, although it is probable the melodies were outlined even before that. Indications are that the overture was the last of the music completed.

The first performance took place May 24, 1810, presumably at a private house as there is no theatrical record of it. In order to enable the playing of the music apart from the play, verses have been written to connect the various movements, a task performed in Germany by the poets Mosengeil and Bernays and in England by William Bartholomew.

In the development of the overture as a form, Beethoven took a conspicuous role. He commenced by following along the lines laid down by Mozart and then branched out for himself, carrying it to its peak. In the "Egmont" overture, as in other similar works, he asserted his independence of form and precedent to the greatest possible extent. There still remain many different styles and moulds of overtures, but this one remains an outstanding example of what is generally termed the modern overture.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

An introduction, Sostenuto ma non troppo, 3-2 time, of 24 bars leads to the main movement, Allegro, 3-4 time. This is a brilliant piece of writing which shows Beethoven at his best. The overture ends with a long Coda, the pace being accelerated, Allegro con brio, the tempo altered to 4-4, and an abundance of new material introduced. The conclusion of the overture is identical with the Finale to the whole of the music written for the play.

Symphony in D Major, "The London" Franz Joseph Haydn

Born March 31, 1732; died May 31, 1809

1. Adagio. Allegro.

3. Minuet.

2. Andante.

4. Finale. Allegro Spiritoso.

In various editions this symphony is given different numbers and therefore it is difficult to assign it a number by which it is universally recognized. In the Breitkopf and Hartel edition, it is given as No. 2, while in the "Salomon Set" it is No. 7. Haydn himself wrote at the top of the manuscript score, "This is the twelfth symphony that I have composed in England".

The first performance took place May 4, 1795, in the large hall of the King's Theatre, London, the occasion being the composer's farewell concert. That the event was an outstanding success may be proved by a reference to the composer's diary. He wrote in part: ''The hall was filled with a picked audience. The whole company was delighted and so was I. I took in this evening four thousand gulden (roughly \$2,000). One can make as much as this only in England''.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

The first movement has a slow moving introduction, Adagio, D Minor, 4-4 time, which commences fortissimo, the whole orchestra playing in unison and octaves.

The strings introduce the main theme of the first movement, Allegro, D Major, 2-2 time. After some brilliant passage work, a subsidiary theme is heard with an ending in E Major.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

A repetition of the main theme occurs in A Major, with the strings and a portion of the wood-wind section carrying the burden. More passage work follows, after which another theme terminates the movement. A repetition of the first theme in the key of the dominant is substituted for the regular second theme. Figures from the first theme are utilized in the development section.

The second movement, Andante, G Major, 2-4 time, follows rondo form. It is built on a main theme with episodes as subsidiaries.

In the third movement, D Major, 3-4 time, the composer has employed the form of a symphonic minuet. A modulațion into B Flat Major features the Trio section.

The fourth movement, Allegro Spiritoso, D Major, 2-2 time, follows wellestablished sonata form. The first theme is heard on the violins, over a tonic organ point, in the bass. It is repeated later an octave higher, over the same organ point. A new counter-melody is heard on the second violins.

The second theme is a cantabile. The entrance is unexpectedly made in B Minor, but soon there comes a modulation to A Major. The development section is shorter than usual, and the movement concludes with a brilliant and lengthy Coda.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

Aria, Il est Doux, Il est Bon (He is Good, He is Kind) from the opera "Herodiade" Jules Emil Frederic Massenet

Born May 12, 1842; died August 13, 1912

Song: In the Silence of Night Sergei Vassilievitch Rachmaninoff

Born April 1, 1873; died March 28, 1943
(Orchestral arrangements by John Oliver.)
Berneice McBeth, soprano.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

Massenet composed "Herodiade" in 1884 and it proved to be one of the great successes of the Opera Comique, Paris. This aria and another Vision Fugitive have done much to keep the opera alive. Rachmaninoff composed In the Silence of Night, perhaps his most popular song, in 1917.

Suite from the opera "Carmen"

Georges Bizet

Born October 25, 1838; died June 3, 1875

- 1. Prelude.
- 2. Aragonaise.
- 3. Intermezzo.
- 4. The Dragoons of Alcala.
- 5. The Toreadors.
- 6. Habanera.
- 7. Mounting the Guard.
- 8. Bohemian Dance.

"Carmen" was produced for the first time in Paris, March 3, 1875, and even today stands as one of the most popular operas the world over. This suite is based on some of the most beautiful themes in a score that sparkles with brilliant melody and masterly orchestration from beginning to end.

The Prelude gives an indication of the tragedy that is to follow. It is taken from the orchestral introduction to the opera and forms the latter portion of it. It is an Andante, introducing a forceful theme of two bars, which is indissolubly associated with the heroine, and conveys a graphic idea of the waywardness of Bizet's frail cigarette girl. At the same time its weird harmonic coloring seems to forebode some strange doom.

The other numbers, such as the Habanera, the Toreador's song, the Dragoons of Alcala and the Mounting of the Guard are known in every opera house and concert hall throughout the world.





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PROGRAMME NOTES

Overture to the opera "Der Freischutz". Carl Maria von Weber Born December 18, 1786; died June 4, 1826

Weber composed "Der Freischutz" to a libretto prepared by his friend, the poet Friedrich Kind. It is based on a popular tradition, familiar to German huntsmen, that whoever would seek the aid of the demon-hunter, may have in exchange for his soul, seven magic bullets certain to hit the desired mark.

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PROGRAMME NOTES

If, within a given time, the hunstman so favored fails to allure another within the demon's power, his life becomes forfeit. If, on the other hand he obtains a fresh victim, his life is extended, while the newcomer is furnished with a supply of the magic shot.

"Der Freischutz", literally translated, means "The Free-Shooter" but the title has no special significance in English and the opera, when given in that language usually is called either "The Demon Huntsman" or "The Hunstman's Bride".

The first performance of the opera took place at the Royal Theatre, Berlin, June 18, 1821. Weber conducted and it was a great success. Mendelssohn was present and "shouted aloud and applauded with enthusiasm".

The overture, which is founded on themes from the opera, is one of the most popular works of its kind in the standard concert repertoire.

After the first performance, Weber made the following entry in his diary:

"First representation of 'Der Freischutz' received with incredible enthusiasm. The overture and the popular songs redemanded: out of seventeen pieces fourteen applauded beyond measure. Everything for the best: I was recalled and went forward to salute the public, accompanied by Frau Seidler and Fraulein Eunike, not being able to find the others. Verses and crowns fell at my feet. Soli Deo Gloria".

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